THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) The percentage of share of PCOs in terms of countrywide revenue earned by the MTNL and the BSNL is 20.05% and 29.66% respectively.

(b) and (c) During last one year 20559 and 90058 PCOs have closed in MTNL and BSNL respectively. The reasons for closure of PCOs are given below:

(i) Non-payment of bills,

(ii) Franchisee getting employment who were earlier unemployed,

(iii) Franchisee shifting to some other city,

(iv) Churning to other private operators,

(v) Death of franchisee.

There is no considerable loss of revenue due to closure of PCOs. It gets compensated by opening of PCOs and traffic handled by closed PCOs gets diverted to other PCOs.

(d) Though there is no significant loss due to closure of PCOs, following steps have been taken to encourage the PCOs.:

(i) PCOs are allotted liberally to all applicants aged 18 years and above without any restricitions.

(ii) 10% of the exchange capacity has been kept reserved for PCOs to encourage opening of more PCOs.

(iii) Commission to the franchisees has been increased by BSNL to 25-35%. As per the new norms, the commission is payable on slab basis of metered call units.

Formation of Millennium Telecom Company

4520. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether MTNL has formed a subsidiary company known as Millennium Telecom Company;

(b) if so, the projects the Company has either installed or marketed and the number of employees in the company;

(c) the profit made by the company since its inception; and

(d) whether the MTNL has formed any other subsidiary company; if so, the name of the company and the status of that company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Sir, MTNL has incorporated a 100% subsidiary company in the name of Millennium Telecom Limited (MTL) on 17-02-2002 for carrying out business as Internet Service Provider.

(b) MTL is presently conducting e-tendering work of MTNL. Total income earned by MTL by way of e-tendering work of MTNL during the last three years is Rs. 576.82 lakhs. There are no full time employees working in MTL, only four MTNL employees looking after statutory activities of MTL as an additional charge.

(c) Since inception upto 31-03-2004, MTL has made a profit of Rs. 164.9 lacs.

(d) Sir, MTNL has also formed one more 100% subsidiary company with the name of Mahanagar Telephone Mauritius Ltd. (MTML). The MTML is registered in Mauritius and has been licensed by Government of Mauritius to provide telecom services in Mauritius. Presently, the Company is in the process of setting up infrastructure and the service roll out is expected to start from mid of 2005.

Provision of internet connections to Schools and Colleges

4521. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to provide high-speed internet connection to various schools and colleges in every district for accessing the important information and rich educational content in local languages; and

(b) If so, by when it would be made available to schools and colleges?